THE PRESENT STATUS AND BREEDING SEASON OF THE GIANT TOAD (*BUFO AGUA*) IN BARBADOS, ST. VINCENT, TRINIDAD AND DEMERARA.*

Not long ago a question arose regarding the present status, and breeding season, of the Giant Toad (*Bufo agua*) in certain of the West Indian colonies, and in order to secure definite data on the subject I wrote to Barbados, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Demerara (British Guiana), receiving the following replies:

Barbados.—No mention of the occurrence of this toad (known locally as the "crapaud") is made either by Ligon (1673) or Hughes (1750). Schomburg in his "History of Barbados," published in 1848, includes it in his list of reptiles on page 679, with the following note: "I have been assured that this species, which is so common in Demerara, was introduced from there about fifteen years ago [i.e., about 1833]."

It is not known exactly when it was introduced into Antigua. It is now very common both on Barbados and Antigua, though on both islands it has become less numerous in recent years, owing probably to the introduction of the mongoose, which seems to prey upon the toad when pressed by hunger.

It certainly lays its eggs at least twice a year. In August last year (1914) ponds in Barbados were full of tadpoles, and again in February this year (1915) the same thing was noticed. (Extract from a letter from Dr. Francis Watts, C.M.G., Imperial Commissioner of Agriculture for the West Indies, Bridgetown, Barbados.)

St. Vincent.—The large toad (*Bufo agua*) seems to be quite extinct here. I hear old people speak of them, but I fancy the mongoose must have

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wiped them out. (Extract from a letter from Mr. W. N. Sands, Agricultural Superintendent, St. Vincent.)

Trinidad.—Toads are plentiful, and about in the wet season, breeding then. The wet season has been very irregular lately. August-October is given as the most likely time for securing material of the young stages. (Information given in a letter from Mr. F. W. Urich, Entomologist to the Board of Agriculture, Trinidad.)

Demerara.—*Bufo agua* is extraordinarily common here and appears to breed about the commencement of the wet season, somewhere in November or thereabouts. (Extract from a letter from Mr. Gilbert E. Bodkin, Government Economic Biologist, Georgetown, Demerara.)

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ON THE PROBABLE ORIGIN OF THE TYPE SPECIMEN OF COPE'S XANTUSIA PICTA.

There can, I think, be no doubt that Cope's *Xantusia picta* is the same species as Stejneger's *Xantusia henshawi.* Cope, however, stated that the type of *X. picta* was from Tejon Pass, California, a locality situated much to the north of the known range of *X. henshawi.* I shall attempt to show that it is almost certain that Cope's type specimen really was collected at Poway, San Diego County, California, not very far from the type locality of Stejneger's species. The evidence, although circumstantial, seems clear. It is as follows:

1.—The type of *Xantusia picta* was sent to Cope by Mr. Rivers, who previously had sent Cope the type of *Xantusia riversiana,* and who was in charge of the natural history collections belonging to the University of California.